



United States
Department of
Agriculture

March 2001

2000 Annual Program Performance Report

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE



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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE FY 2000 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Introduction

This FY 2000 Annual Performance Report (APR) is presented by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in accordance with Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requirements. This report is part of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) FY 2000 Department-wide Annual Performance Report. The Agency updated and finalized its long range strategic plans for FY 2000-2005 in September 2000 in coordination with the USDA Strategic Plan and the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area goals. NASS is one of four agencies in the REE mission area. The FY 2000 APR reflects the NASS 1997-2002 Strategic Plan goals and objectives. The NASS management initiatives included in the FY 2000 APP have been discontinued and replaced with new management performance goals and objectives. Only Federal employees were involved in the preparation of this report.

Background

NASS provides the basic agricultural and rural data needs for the people of the United States, those working in agriculture, and those living in rural communities by objectively providing important, usable, and accurate statistical information and services needed to make informed decisions. NASS's statistics keep those involved with America's biggest industry well-informed, provide the basic information necessary to keep agricultural markets stable and efficient, and help maintain a level playing field for all users of agricultural statistics. USDA published its first crop report in 1863, and further strengthened this responsibility in 1905 by creating the Crop Reporting Board now the Agricultural Statistics Board. NASS is the primary statistical agency in the Department whose mission is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U. S. agriculture. These responsibilities were authorized in the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627). NASS is responsible for conducting the census of agriculture program that provides comprehensive information about the Nation's agriculture every 5 years. NASS's responsibility to conduct the census of agriculture is authorized under Public Law 105-113, the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Title 7 U.S.C. 2204g). Internally, the statistics are used across the Department and are provided to other agencies in their analyzes of programs, policy development, etc., as well as, use in their annual performance measures.

NASS's current official statistics program and the census of agriculture program are complemented by its statistical research and service program. This component works to improve statistical survey methods and to test advanced technology for timely and cost efficient production of high quality agricultural statistics.

GOAL 1: THROUGH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION, EMPOWER THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM WITH KNOWLEDGE THAT WILL IMPROVE COMPETITIVENESS IN DOMESTIC PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING.

Producers and other data users need objective, reliable, and timely data to make informed production and marketing decisions. Production agriculture measured as fully and as accurately as possible permits each commodity sector to determine supplies and competitive prices for world marketing of U.S. agricultural products. Official statistics promote a level playing field in production agriculture with impartial information available to all at a predetermined and publicized date and time.

Objective 1.1: Describe U.S. agriculture as fully as possible, providing timely and accurate agricultural statistics that are used throughout the agricultural sector to evaluate supplies and determine competitive prices for world marketing of U.S. commodities.

Objective 1.2: Promote a level playing field in production agriculture with impartial statistics available to all at a predetermined and publicized date and time.

NASS is the primary agricultural statistics agency in USDA. Annually, NASS publishes over 400 national reports, covering over 120 crop and 45 livestock items, complemented by over 8,000 additional State reports. These basic and unbiased data are critical to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, and input sectors of agriculture. Official USDA national, State, and county estimates are issued annually relating to number of farms and land in farms; acreage, yield, production, and stocks of grains; production of hay, oilseeds, cotton, potatoes, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, floriculture, and selected specialty crops; inventories and production of hogs, cattle, sheep and wool, goats and mohair, mink, catfish, trout, poultry, eggs, and dairy products; prices received by farmers for products, prices paid for commodities and services, and related indexes; cold storage inventories; agricultural chemical use; and other related items that affect the agricultural economy. Additionally, estimates relating to nursery and greenhouse production, agricultural chemical use, postharvest chemical use are provided on a periodic basis. Every five years NASS conducts the census of agriculture which expands program coverage to include rare specialty commodities, equine, and numerous demographic data series. Consequently, annual performance targets for coverage are 100 percent in census years and fluctuate in the interim years. Annual performance goals, targets, and actuals are summarized in the following table:

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Provide timely and impartial agricultural statistics for use by all market participants which promote an economically viable and competitive agricultural production system.			
! Percent of NASS reports that are complete, meet scheduled release dates, and contain no data errors.	99.0% ¹	99.0%	99.8%
! Percent of total national agricultural production included in the NASS annual statistics program.	91%	95%	n/a ²
! Percent of data users who rate NASS data as important or essential to the orderly marketing of agricultural products.	n/a	90%	n/a ³
! The NASS annual report release calendar is published and distributed prior to the start of each year.	yes	yes	yes

¹Revised APR data – 1996-99 data was incorrectly reported. ² Data is not available until July 2001. ³ Performance indicators for evaluating data users ratings are being discontinued but will be replaced with information from the American Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Table 1: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for Reports and Releases

Charts and Tables: NASS sets annual performance targets for completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of the reports. The FY 2000 actual performance for reports and releases surpassed the FY 2000 target. NASS statistical program coverage target for the 2000 calendar year was 95 percent. Cash receipts data for 1999 for the commodities covered in the 2000 program indicate the 2000 target will be reached, however it is not known at this time.

Year	No. of NASS Reports and Releases	No. of reports released on time	Percent	No. of reports without corrected erratas	Percent	No. of reports released on time and without issuing erratas	Percent	Target
1996	384 ¹	384 ¹	100%	380 ¹	99%	380 ¹	99%	
1997	369 ¹	369 ¹	100%	367 ¹	99.5%	367 ¹	99.5%	
1998	425 ¹	425 ¹	100%	425 ¹	100%	425 ¹	100%	
1999	419 ¹	418 ¹	99.8%	416 ¹	99.3%	415 ¹	99%	
2000	425	424	99.8%	425	100%	424	99.8%	99%

¹ Revised APR data – 1996-99 data was incorrectly reported.

Table 2: NASS Reports and Releases

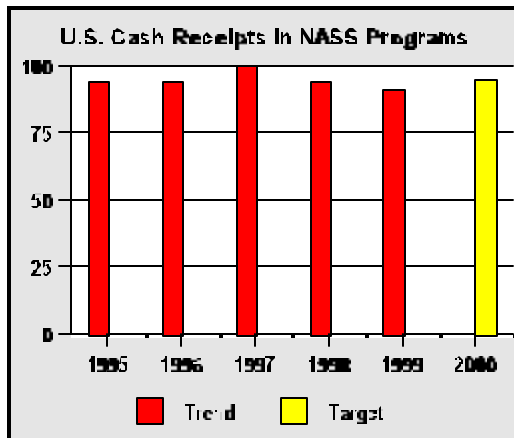


Chart 1: Percent of U.S. Cash Receipts in NASS Statistical Programs

Year	Estimated Total U.S. Cash Receipts (Mil. Dollars)	Total U.S. Cash Receipts in NASS Statistical Programs (Mil. Dollars)	Percent	Target
1995	188,055	176,080	94%	
1996	199,138	186,287	94%	
1997	207,611	207,443	100% ¹	
1998	196,761	184,485	94%	
1999	188,610	171,377	91%	
2000	n/a	n/a	n/a ²	95%

¹ Census of Agriculture provides complete coverage.

² Data not available until July 2001.

Table 3: U.S. Cash Receipts in NASS Statistical Programs

2000 Data: The performance data for assessing reports and releases are information published in the Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) calendar and on Agency information maintained internally in Headquarters offices in Washington, D.C. by the Marketing and Information Services Office (MISO). It is maintained and reviewed for consistency, completeness, and accuracy. Revisions to the previous years APR data are indicated in each figure. The USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) is the source of the data for calculating NASS statistics program coverage. Farm cash receipts for 2000 are not available until July 2001. There were no viable customer service data available to accurately report the percent of data users who rate NASS data as important or essential to the orderly marketing of agricultural products.

Analysis of Results: NASS met its performance goal in providing timely and impartial agricultural statistics on time and error free. In general, the number of reports and information released by NASS continues to grow in order to meet the ever-growing demands and challenges associated with data users and the public's need for more and better information. The number of reports issued annually over the last three years has grown when compared to 1997, while overall annual appropriated budgets to support increases have been limited. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! Reports and Releases: Of the 425 scheduled releases on the ASB calendar, 424 releases, or 99.8 percent of reports, were released on-time and error-free for January through December 2000. Only the *Vegetables - 1999 Annual Summary* was delayed on January 14, 2000, to January 28, 2000, at 3 p.m. ET. A news release was issued on January 13, 2000, informing the public of the delay and rescheduled release date. The later release of the annual vegetable report had no impact on the commodity market.

Furthermore, there were no erratas published in 2000. Report errors determined to be "market sensitive" are corrected with publication of an official errata notice. Cosmetic and non-data errors or "non-market sensitive errors" are tracked, documented, and corrected, but an official errata is not published for those reports and they are not included in the 2000 performance data. Revisions to preliminary data series or forecasts are part of the Agency's standard operating procedures and are not considered as errors.

! Annual Statistics Program Coverage: Chart 1 shows there were no results for 2000 and the performance data will not be available until July 2001. NASS statistical program

coverage is based on cash receipt estimates published by ERS. Cash receipts provide a standard unit for collapsing and comparing livestock and crop production. Commodities not covered by NASS are estimated using economic models or external data sources to achieve completeness.

As Chart 1 and Table 3 indicate, NASS program coverage expands to 100 percent during census years, as seen with the 1997 Census of Agriculture. The 1997 Census of Agriculture was the first census conducted by NASS. The census allows for open-ended reporting of all commodities produced, thus providing a vehicle for obtaining data on rarer items. Estimates of commodity coverage do not reflect numerous data series relating to economic, environmental, and demographic subjects. Data and calculations for evaluating the 1999 statistical program coverage was available in August 2000. For crops in 1999, the following were not in the program: jojoba, kale, collards, chili peppers, radishes, squash, other miscellaneous vegetables, pumpkins, other berries, other miscellaneous fruits and nuts, bentgrass, bluegrass, crimson clover, fescue, orchardgrass, red clover, ryegrass, sorghum-sudan crosses, other seeds, other field crops, forest products, other greenhouse. (Note: Other greenhouse was part of the 1998 program because of the special study on horticulture, but nothing was done with the 1999 year.) Also, the following are being added for 2000: kale, collards, chili peppers, squash, pumpkins, and other greenhouse. For livestock in 1999, the following were not in the program: crawfish, other aquaculture, and other livestock. (Note: Horses and mules were covered in 1999, but not in 2000; crawfish and other aquaculture were part of the 1998 special study, but not covered in 1999.)

Based on historical data, NASS estimates 95 percent of the total national production to be covered by the NASS statistical program for 2000. This jumps from 91 percent in 1999 to 95 percent in 2000 with greenhouse and nursery crops included in 2000. The final program coverage calculations for 2000 are not available until July 2001 and will be updated in the FY 2001 APR. The target level for the annual program coverage calculations will never coincide with the APR reports and will always be a year behind.

! **Data User Ratings:** Information provided by data users at the Data User Meeting in Chicago on October 18-19, 1999, covered a wide variety of commodity and statistical data issues. Questionnaires are distributed at these meetings, but very little numerical information was provided by the data users on customer satisfaction. The incompleteness of the information makes any method of numerical calculations impractical because they would not be representative of NASS's wide spectrum of data users. As footnoted in Table 1, the performance indicators for evaluating data users ratings are being discontinued and will be replaced with information generated from the results of the American Customer Satisfaction Survey. Future agency plans for customer satisfaction surveys are explained in the Descriptions of Plans and Schedule and Current Fiscal Year Performance for this goal.

! **Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) Calendar:** The performance indicator was met with the publication and distribution of the ASB calendar in the fall of 1999. This annual publication lists release dates for all NASS national statistical reports, covering over 120 crops and 45 livestock items. The calendar is published and released from NASS Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

Description of Plans and Schedules: Performance measures established in the FY 2000 APP for evaluating data user ratings and satisfaction with NASS data products and services were changed and will be replaced by the American Customer Satisfaction Survey. The survey was conducted in September-October 2000 and the results of the survey were

released to the public in December 2000. This was NASS's first-ever numerical measurement of customer satisfaction based on the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) which measures the Agency's performance regarding customer service and products. NASS's score was 72, comparable with the private sector score of 72.1, and 3.5 points higher than the 1999 Federal government index of 68.6. The use of this survey is now being widely used in government and private industry for establishing baselines and comparing levels of service provided among organizations. The ACSI and index components have now been incorporated into the most recent FY 2001 and 2002 APP plans and will serve as the standard for the future.

Current Fiscal Year Performance:

- ! *Reports and Releases:*** NASS continues its efforts to sustain a 99 percent target level of on-time and error-free reports through continuous staff training and use of computer equipment and technology. NASS published the first U.S. estimates of the percent of acres planted with genetically modified herbicide resistant, insect resistant, and stacked gene seed varieties for corn, soybeans, and cotton in 2000. These estimates were published at the national level and each of the 11 major corn producing States, 14 major soybean producing States, and seven major cotton producing States. These estimates will also be provided during 2001 in the March *Prospective Plantings* and June *Acreage* reports.

A new Monthly Hog Survey will collect information on the size of the breeding herd, sows and gilts mated the prior month, sows farrowed, pigs per litter, and pig crop. This monthly information is published on the last Friday of each month beginning with the December 2000 *Hogs and Pigs* report.

The December *Hogs and Pigs* report and the January *Cattle* report now have additional breakouts for larger size operations at the U.S. level for statistics on number of operations and size of herd. The July *Cattle* report now includes information for the 11 largest cattle States in addition to the United States. Information published for the 11 States are the total inventory of cattle and calves, all cows, beef cows, milk cows, and calf crop. A new question on the number of beef and milk replacement heifers expected to calve during the year was added to the January Cattle Survey and the U.S. estimate was published in the January 2001 *Cattle* report. Also, information on feeder cattle grazing on small grains as of January 1 in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas was published in the January 2001 *Cattle* Report. Finally, the January 2001 Cattle Survey includes questions concerning losses of cattle to predators, which NASS will publish in the *Cattle Predator Loss* report in the spring of 2001. County estimates will now be available each year for total cattle, beef cows, and milk cows for all States accounting for 1 percent or more of the Nation's total for these classes. Cattle county estimates will be available in the spring of each year. The February *Milk Production* report now provides the percent of U.S. production by size of operations. NASS began posting the monthly *Canadian Cattle on Feed* and quarterly *Canadian Hog* reports to the NASS website.

Detailed information for chicken and turkey parts (e.g., breasts and legs) was added to the monthly *Cold Storage* report in 2001. Previously, these data are only published as "other chicken" and "other turkey."

- ! *Annual Statistics Program Coverage:*** Cash receipt data for the 2000 statistical program coverage evaluation will be made available by ERS in July 2001. NASS continuously strives to increase program coverage, but expansion of program coverage is limited by budget resources each fiscal year.

- ! **Data User Ratings:** Annual Data User Meetings were held at the beginning of FY 2001. The first meeting was held in Washington, D.C., on October 10, 2000, to discuss a host of chemical use, food safety, and environmental issues. A second data user meeting was held in Chicago, IL., October 16, 2000, with commodity and agricultural industry representatives to discuss crop and livestock program issues. NASS anticipates continuing these annual data users meetings to discuss customer data needs and service, and to seek their advice on current and emerging issues.

The Federal Consulting Group presented the results of the American Customer Satisfaction Survey to NASS in December 2000. The ACSI will provide a benchmark for NASS in FY 2001 to assess agency processes and program solutions. NASS also intends to use the ACSI for assessing implementation of future quality initiatives. The ACSI index and its components are included in the Revised FY 2001 and FY 2002 APP.

- ! **Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) Calendar:** The ASB calendar was published and distributed to the public in the fall of 2000. The 2001 monthly *Crop Production* reports will be released, on average, about the 10th rather than the 11th of the month and fewer *Crop Production* reports will be released on Fridays. Beginning in January 2001, a press release on NASS Statistical Program Monthly Highlights are issued on or about the first of each month. This will inform data users and keep the public up-to-date on forthcoming changes in the reports released during the coming month.

Program Evaluations: A technical program evaluation of the Cold Storage Program was completed in FY 2000. The initial reason for the Cold Storage Technical Review was the cold storage data series was thought to be deteriorating due to the quality of the list (missing plants) and poor response rates. Since the formation of a Technical Review Team (TRT), SSOs and Headquarters have worked on improving the list and response rates through various ways, including visiting refusals and giving plants the option to report electronically. When the TRT began its review, there were no plants reporting data electronically. Currently, NASS receives monthly electronic data for 125 of 800 cold storage facilities (16 percent). Collecting data this way has eliminated the need to make 50 individual contacts (50 plants were reporting data for 125 locations). Data collected electronically represent about 60 percent of the cold storage data being reported. With continued efforts to improve the list and response rates, the Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section agrees that the NASS Cold Storage program should be continued. While the report may need to be modified, it is still a viable, necessary, and useful data series.

GOAL 2: ENSURE AN ADEQUATE FOOD AND FIBER SUPPLY AND PROMOTE FOOD SAFETY THROUGH IMPROVED DETECTION, SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION.

Essential pest management practices data are provided for analyzing policy and program consequences for producers and consumers. Comprehensive analyses of farmer practices are made possible by measures of strategies used by growers as alternatives to chemical use. In addition, under the Department of Health and Human Services/USDA joint initiative to Ensure the Safety of Imported and Domestic Fruits and Vegetables, NASS is responsible for the collection of food safety information for fruits and vegetables.

Objective 2.1: Provide meaningful statistical projections that enable the producers and the marketing channels to minimize economic risk and provide food security for consumers.

Objective 2.2: Provide important data on pre- and post-harvest chemical applications for informed evaluations of risk potential associated with using or discontinuing chemicals relative to both food safety and food security.

NASS will provide needed data on pest management strategies used by producers and make meaningful data readily available to all who need this data for business and policy decisions. This program will also establish a baseline of agricultural practices related to the potential for microbial contamination of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Provide important data on pre- and post-harvest chemical applications for informed evaluations of risk potential associated with using or discontinuing chemicals relative to both food safety and food security.	yes	yes	yes
! Provide survey data showing percentage of U.S. farmland employing integrated pest management practices.	n/a	10,000	14,028
! Number of fruit and vegetable growers and packing houses surveyed regarding agricultural practices related to food safety issues.			

Table 4: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for Integrated Pest Management and Agricultural Practices

2000 Data: The data in Table 4 is based on information residing in the Agency's statistical information system managed and maintained by various Headquarters staffs in the Environmental, Economic, and Demographics Branch; Census and Survey Division; and the Information Technology Division. Sampling information and survey response rates are available by State and summarized at the national level and are reviewed for consistency, completeness, and accuracy.

Analysis of Results: NASS met its performance goal with release of *Pest Management Practices - 2000* and by conducting the *1999 Fruit and Vegetable Agricultural Practices* survey. Similar publications are planned for 2001. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! Integrated Pest Management (IPM): Survey data for *Pest Management Practices* were based on a probability area frame with a sample of 6,840 segments or parcels of land across the United States. Estimates of the percent of farms and/or acres using a specific practice (pest management or agricultural) are calculated using sample area frame weights. The reliability of these calculated values are then reviewed prior to final estimates being published.

! Food Safety: Survey data for *1999 Fruit and Vegetable Agricultural Practices* conducted in early 2000 were based on a list sample of approximately 17,989 fresh fruit and vegetable producers and packers. Of the total 17,989 operations selected in the sample, NASS was able to conduct interviews with 14,028 operations for the agricultural practices survey, with 22 percent of the original sample being refusals or inaccessible. Of the

14,028 interviews conducted, 9,706 were completed good reports; 2,760 operations did not have the crop being surveyed, and 1,562 operations were screened out and did not meet the criteria for the survey. Data analysis continues with plans for a an April 2001 publication.

Current Fiscal Year Performance:

! **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** Since 1997, NASS conducted Fall Area Surveys with a focus on measuring farmer participation in IPM practices. Although the Fall Area Survey no longer exists, NASS has sampled the same area tracts for one final year to fulfill project obligations to assist in measurement of the USDA policy goal of "75 percent of the Nation's farmland" under an IPM program by the year 2000. Plans are to integrate key pest management questions into existing survey instruments for chemical usage and continue to collect the same pest management practices information. Results from the 2000 IPM Survey will be released on May 30, 2001. NASS is a member of USDA's IPM subcommittee which provides immediate feedback on related pest management programs.

! **Food Safety:** The 1999 Fruit and Vegetable Agricultural Practices survey was conducted in early 2000 and data analysis continues with plans for a April 2001 publication. This survey is designed to establish a baseline of agricultural practices related to the potential for microbial contamination of fresh fruits and vegetables. Beyond 2000, key food safety issues will be addressed based on the needs of the data user community. Development of the Agricultural Practices Study occurred with direct input of Food and Drug Administration officials, USDA representatives, and industry leaders. Input for these program areas was provided during a NASS Environmental Data User's meeting held in October 2000.

Program Evaluations: No official evaluations were conducted.

GOAL 3: FOSTER A HEALTHY AND WELL-NOURISHED POPULATION HAVING THE KNOWLEDGE, DESIRE, AND MEANS TO MAKE HEALTH-PROMOTING CHOICES.

Objective 3.1: Provide statistical advice, consultation, and services to USDA and State agencies concerned with health, nutrition, and education when seeking new data or the statistical analysis of existing data for policy decisions.

Current Fiscal Year Performance: While there is no specific performance goal or measure established for the objective, NASS provides technical assistance and guidance, as needed, to the REE mission area and other USDA policy officials in providing data and information needed to support this goal at the Departmental level. For example, in FY 2000, NASS worked with the Nutrient Data Laboratory as described below.

! **ARS - Nutrient Data Laboratory:** NASS provided continued statistical consultation to ARS's Nutrient Data Laboratory. This consisted of designing and implementing national level plans for sampling commodity foods and fresh produce for the laboratory's National Food and Nutrient Analysis Program. NASS developed sample designs and data collection procedures for within-store sampling of fresh produce, and provided consultation and training on aggregating nutrient data from different sources in conjunction with the laboratory's Architecture and Integration Management Nutrient Data Bank System. NASS began developing a sample design of Native American tribes for traditional Native American foods.

The NASS program supports Goal 3 through its reimbursable program; there were no

appropriated resources associated with this goal in FY 2000. NASS does not plan on establishing specific performance measures for this goal in the future. This goal is a component of the overall REE strategic plan.

GOAL 4: ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF AND BUILDING ON AGRICULTURE'S AND FORESTRY'S COMPLEX LINKS WITH SOIL, WATER, AIR, AND BIOTIC RESOURCES.

Statistically sound information relevant to policy and production decisions associated with land use, chemical use and integrated pest management practices on U.S. farms and ranches is critical for the effective stewardship of America's rural resources, the environment, and the health and well-being of farm workers.

Objective 4.1: Provide statistical data on agricultural chemical use, production practices, land productivity and integrated pest management practices so proper decisions can be made regarding stewardship of America's rural resources and the environment.

Strategies and resources for achieving this performance goal include conducting ongoing surveys to provide and expand needed information concerning quantities of chemicals applied to agricultural commodities; supplying important information on land use and productivity for use in environmental monitoring efforts; supplying important economic information relevant to policy and production decisions associated with chemical use and IPM practices on farms and ranches; and supplying information relevant to measuring the adoption of IPM practices in agriculture.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Provide statistical data on agricultural chemical use, production practices, land use, and integrated pest management practices so proper decisions can be made regarding stewardship of America's rural resources and the environment. ! Number of commodities for which pesticide use data are collected.	39 ¹	50	40

¹ Revised APR data – number of commodities were incorrectly reported.

Table 5: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for Pesticide Use Data

Charts and Tables: NASS sets annual performance targets for the number of commodities surveyed in collecting pesticide data. The FY 2000 actual performance did not meet the FY 2000 target.

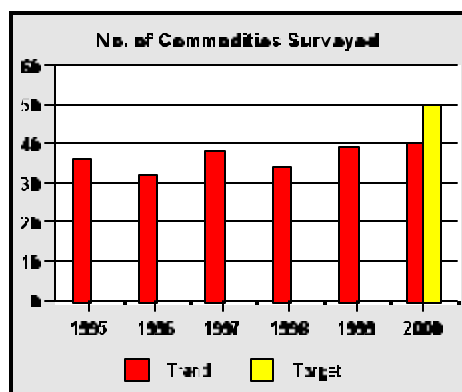


Chart 2: Number of Commodities Surveyed

Year	Number of Commodities Surveyed	
	Actual	Target
1995	36	
1996	32	
1997	38	
1998	34	
1999	39 ¹	
2000	40	50

¹ Revised APR Data (see Table 5)

Table 6: Number of Commodities Surveyed

2000 Data: The data in Chart 2 and Table 6 are based on information residing in the Agency's statistical information system managed and maintained by various Headquarters staff in the Environmental, Economic, and Demographics Branch, Census and Survey Division, and the Information Technology Division. The number of commodities covered in the surveys are summarized at the State and national levels and are reviewed by for consistency, completeness, and accuracy.

Analysis of Results: NASS did not reach its 2000 target for this performance goal. The following publications released in 2000 as a result of chemical use data collection efforts included: *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Field Crops Summary*, *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Fruits and Nuts*, *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Restricted Use Pesticides*, *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Cattle and Cattle Facilities*, *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Swine and Swine Facilities*, *Agricultural Chemical Usage - Postharvest Applications for Soybeans and Oats*. The target level for the number of commodities surveyed was not met because the environmental program was not fully implemented due to budget constraints. Estimates of chemical use statistics (e.g., acres treated, application rates, etc.) are calculated using sample weights. The reliability of these calculated values are reviewed thoroughly prior to final estimates being published. The number of commodities included in these surveys are simply counted and tabulated. This measure shows the expanding coverage of chemical use data with the increasing number of commodities being surveyed.

NASS has conducted chemical use surveys since 1990 in an effort to assist the Department

in addressing concerns expressed in Presidential initiatives over the safety of chemical use on the Nation's food crops. Over the past ten years, as concern over food safety has been joined by interest in pesticide issues related to worker exposure and water quality, NASS has made every effort to increase program coverage to address known data gaps. Even with no increase in the base budget allocated to pesticide surveys from 1997 to 1999 and slight increases in FY 2000, coverage of commodities has increased steadily as knowledge of environmental issues has increased and survey efficiencies have been realized. Budget constraints impact NASS's ability to reach this target.

Current Fiscal Year Performance: Plans for 2001 and beyond include continued program expansion to provide coverage for key commodities. In addition to the publication of several documents containing commodity chemical use statistics, data collection has been completed for selected vegetable crops, multiple field crops, and is underway for floriculture and nursery commodities. In addition, analysis is winding down for a planned 2001 publication on agriculture practices related to the production of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Program Evaluation: No evaluation was conducted but program comments are annually solicited from one of the primary data users, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as a part of the overall NASS program review. In addition, staff are constantly meeting with industry stakeholders, the Office of Pest Management Policy in USDA, other USDA agencies, State governments, universities, and numerous private organizations on issues related to pesticide use data. The first annual NASS Environmental Data Users meeting was held in Washington, D.C., on October 10, 2000.

GOAL 5: EMPOWER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES, THROUGH RESEARCH-BASED INFORMATION AND EDUCATION, TO ADDRESS THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS FACING OUR YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

Greater economic opportunity and quality of life is made possible for those most in need through policy and program decisions based on sound statistical data from agricultural censuses and surveys. Annual surveys monitor the economic status of those who operate and work on the Nation's farms and ranches and provide needed data for policy analysis. The Bureau of Economic Analysis receives important data for measuring economic activity at the county level. NASS will continue to improve coverage of minority farm operators when conducting the census of agriculture to provide needed demographic data and document the contributions to agricultural production from these farm and ranch operators.

Objective 5.1: Provide detailed data from the census of agriculture at specified intervals to facilitate locality based policy and business decisions benefitting farmers, ranchers, and rural residents.

Objective 5.2: Provide necessary and sufficient economic data on prices, labor, cost of production, farm numbers, and farm income to enable informed policy decisions to benefit farmers, ranchers, and rural residents.

The Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics, whose members represent and are affiliated with industry groups, commodity groups, organizations, universities, corporations, and other data users, are providing valuable input during the planning cycle for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. The committee will be meeting periodically over the next several years to review and discuss content and other relevant issues for planning and conducting

the next census of agriculture. There will be a limited number of performance targets established during the planning and re-engineering cycle.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Provide detailed data from the census of agriculture at specified intervals to facilitate locality based policy and business decisions benefitting farmers, ranchers, and rural residents. Provide necessary and sufficient economic data on prices, labor, cost of production, farm numbers, and farm income to enable informed policy decisions to benefit farmers, ranchers, and rural residents.	10	1/	1/
! Number of months earlier than previous agricultural censuses for release of U.S. census data.	18%	1/	1/
! Percent completeness improvement for coverage of minority operated farms compared to the previous agricultural census.	2/	2/	2/
! Documented evidence that AELOS ¹ data are requested and used to make informed decisions by a wide cross-section of data users for analyzing changes in farm financial health, land ownership patterns and inputs contributed to agricultural production by landlords.			

¹ Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey

1/ The census of agriculture is conducted every 5 years. Data for the 1997 Census of Agriculture were collected in 1998, and released on February 1, 1999.

2/ Requests for this information will be documented through contacts with industry groups, commodity groups, farm worker organizations, environmental associations, universities, corporations, and other data users. Contact will be documented from official correspondence, meetings, conferences, exhibitions, and speeches by both Headquarters and field office staff. NASS could track the value and usefulness of this information through customer surveys and calls received to the toll-free customer service hot line once the AELOS results are available to the public early in the 2001 calendar year.

Table 7: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for the Census of Agriculture

2000 Data: Since the census of agriculture is conducted every 5 years, no additional performance information is available during non-census years; therefore, no 2000 data are available. The Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS) is a census follow-on survey administered approximately every 10 years; therefore, no AELOS data are available until 2001.

Analysis of Results: There were no performance targets established for this goal in FY 2000. AELOS is a census follow-on survey administered approximately every 10 years, with the last survey completed in 1988. The purpose is to provide economic and land ownership characteristics from operators and farmland owners (landlords). Detailed information on net cash farm income, sales, expenses, assets, and debt are published for the Nation, regions, and all 50 states. In this unique survey, data is collected to provide a count of landlords and their contributions to the agriculture sector.

AELOS data collection began in January 2000 and ended in September 2000 and was conducted in two data collection phases. In the first phase, farm operators were contacted to collect economic data and landlord information for their operation. The sample size for this first phase was 42,328. The landlords identified in Phase 1 were used to build the Phase 2 sample. The landlord sample consisted of 49,043 landlords with complete addresses. An additional 19,208 landlords were not contacted because it was institutional land (land owned by Federal or State governments, Indian Reservations, research facilities, etc.) or the operator refused to give the names and/or addresses of the landlord. The majority of the data was collected by mail. In the Operator Phase, 85.7 percent of the farmers contacted responded to the survey and 75 percent of the operators contacted supplied NASS with usable data. In the Landlord Phase, 72 percent of the landlords contacted provided NASS with usable data.

Description of Plans and Schedules:

- ! ***Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS):*** The 1999 AELOS is targeted to be released in May 2001. This performance measure is expected to be discontinued from NASS's FY 2002 and Revised FY 2001 Performance Plan.
- ! ***Census of Agriculture:*** The cyclical downward trend in the reduction of resources in FY 1999, FY 2000, and FY 2001 occurred after completing the 1997 Census of Agriculture in 1998. Funding cycle will begin increasing in FY 2002. This is typical to the 5-year census cycle and is normally associated with the completion of the previous census activities and the start-up of the planning phase for the next census of agriculture.

In preparation for conducting the next census of agriculture, the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics met in Washington, D.C., November 30-December 1, 1999, and April 25-26, 2000, and are planning to meet again April 3-4, 2001. The Committee consists of 25 members representing a broad range of agricultural disciplines and interests. It meets to advise the Secretary of Agriculture and NASS on the scope, content, and timing of periodic censuses and surveys of agriculture.

Major activities in FY 2001 and 2002 include specific list building strategies and activities; formulation of data collection plans targeted for American Indian and minority farm operators; equipment installation and testing; census mail list development; printing of census questionnaires; completion of final specifications, development, and testing procedures for data collection, processing, and analysis phases of the census; completion of publicity and outreach plans and printing of materials; and determination of final census data products design, mix, and production schedules. These ongoing planning and re-engineering efforts will continue into FY 2002 and beyond and will provide a solid foundation in preparing for the data collection, processing, analysis, summarization, and publication of the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Completion of these preparatory activities is critical to the scheduled mailing of the 2002 Census of Agriculture questionnaires to the Nation's farmers and ranchers in December 2002. The data collection and processing cycle of the census of agriculture beginning in FY 2003 requires considerably more resources than the current ongoing activities associated with the planning and re-engineering phase. Existing performance measures for this goal are being discontinued but are being replaced with new performance indicators in the FY 2002 and Revised FY 2001 Performance Plan.

Current Fiscal Year Performance:

- ! ***Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS)***: Analyses of the survey data are on-going and the final report is being prepared for release in May 2001.
- ! ***Census of Agriculture***: Post-census activities includes distributing special studies on the Census of Aquaculture, the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, and the Census of Horticulture Specialties, in addition to distribution of 1997 Census of Agriculture special publications and products. Specific information for each of these surveys are covered in detail in the new products and services section of this APR.

The 2000 Census of Agriculture Content Test project began in May 2000. The purpose of this project is to evaluate the report form that will be used to count the number of farms and measure U.S. agricultural production in the 2002 Census of Agriculture. This will be accomplished by testing three panels of the two report forms. The test will evaluate the scanning and optical/intelligent character recognition (OCR/ICR) technology as well as the survey methodology and content concepts of new questions and sections.

The pretest or first phase of the content test began in May 2000 with an evaluation of the preliminary report form by field enumerators at the Maryland and Virginia State Statistical Offices' (SSOs) June mid-year workshops. Pretesting of the draft report form was conducted in September 2000 with nearly 200 operations in 15 States contacted. The second phase of the content test began December 15, 2000, with the mailout of approximately 15,000 census test report forms. Response to the content test is not required by law. The third phase includes a follow-up of approximately 1,000 operations starting January 2001 and continuing through March 2001 as the forms from Phase 2 are returned and the data are evaluated. SSO participants and Headquarters staff will re-contact respondents and conduct personal follow-up interviews in this phase. During these meetings, interviewers will refer back to the respondents' completed Phase 2 report forms and ask specific questions about their understanding and reporting. All respondents who were selected as special case operations and returned report forms in Phase 2, will be interviewed in Phase 3. During the third phase, focus groups may also be used to evaluate individual sections of the report form that are identified as problematic, such as those with incomplete data, inconsistent data, or if respondents experience significant problems with form content.

The objectives for the content testing are to test and evaluate the census report form design and analyze the results in preparation for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. This includes assessment of questionnaire format and design, new content items, and changes to question wording. Respondent comprehension of the report form will be analyzed in three phases of testing, namely pretesting, mailout, and the follow-up interview. It will also test census processing procedures, and assess the factors affecting the census programs and processing methods. To support this objective, the Phase 2 mailout handling and processing will simulate the procedures planned for the 2002 census as closely as possible. The results of the census content test will be included in future annual performance reports in the program evaluation section for the census of agriculture.

Program Evaluations: No program evaluations were completed in FY 2000.

GOAL 6: ENHANCE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE REE GOALS.

NASS conducts surveys for and lends technical expertise to other Federal agencies, State governments, and private organizations on a reimbursable basis. NASS provides support and assistance in the areas of questionnaire and sample design, data collection and editing, analysis of survey results, and training. NASS also provides technical consultation, support, and assistance for international programs under participating agency service agreements.

Objective 6.1: Facilitate partnerships with State Departments of Agriculture, Land Grant Colleges and Universities, and other cooperators to enhance the statistical information available on U.S. agriculture, respond to local data needs, and reduce respondent burden on the Nation's farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses.

Objective 6.2: Ensure up-to-date, reliable, and efficient technological systems to effectively manage information to meet both internal and external needs.

NASS performs services and statistical consultation for other Federal and State agencies and private commodity organizations on a reimbursable basis. Statistics generated meet special needs not covered by the national agricultural statistics program. In addition, statistical consultation by NASS staff members contributes to improvements in the overall quality and consistency of statistical information produced for the needs of other organizations.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Promote partnerships with State Departments of Agriculture, Land Grant Colleges and Universities, and other cooperators and ensure up-to-date, reliable, and efficient information management systems.	75 ¹	n/a ²	73
! Number of cooperative agreements and memorandums of understanding between NASS and outside partners.	2 ¹	n/a ²	2
! Number of security technologies and security system architectures adopted and deployed.			

¹ Actual data was inadvertently omitted in the FY 2000 APP. ² Target was not established in the FY 2000 APP.

Table 8: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for Agreements and Security Technologies

2000 Data: The data in Table 8 is based on hand tabulations and counts by the Headquarters staff. The number of agreements was prepared by the Budget and Administrative Services Offices and the number of security systems was provided by the Information Technology Division (ITD). There was no automated systems used to track or generate this information. The information was reviewed for consistency, completeness, and accuracy.

Analysis of Results: The targets for this goal had not been established for the FY 2000 APP, therefore a determination of goal attainment could not be measured in this report. However, the actual number of partnerships with external cooperators and the number of security systems and technologies were established for FY 1999 and FY 2000. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! Cooperative Agreements and MOUs: NASS had 29 State Statistical Offices (SSOs) who had a total of 31 cooperative agreements and 29 memorandums of understandings with State Departments of Agriculture, land grant colleges and universities, and other cooperators. Headquarters had 11 agreements and two MOUs in FY 2000. These unique State-Federal cooperative agreements are established each year in order to facilitate work to conduct special state (or multi-state) surveys and services in cooperation with State Departments of Agriculture, land-grant colleges and universities, and industry groups by the SSOs. In FY 2000, work included 111 special surveys covering such varied issues as customer service, farm safety and health, pesticide use, county estimates, nursery/horticulture, farm finance, and specialty crops.

Survey Type	Number of Surveys
Seeds, Field Crops, Vegetables	18
Fruits and Nuts	20
County Estimates	7
Cropping Practices, Pesticide Use	3
Livestock, Poultry	7
Safety, Health, Disability	3
Nursery and Floriculture	3
Farm Finance, Land Values	4
Miscellaneous	46
TOTAL	111

Table 9: Special SSO Surveys Conducted in FY 2000

! Security Technologies and Systems: NASS planned to implement four systems in FY 2000 but was only able to implement two of the systems due to lack of available budget resources. The four systems included intrusion detection, a secure system for processing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) data, telecommunication routers which included firewalls, and the encryption software required by the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) system from the National Finance Center (NFC).

NASS successfully completed the SafeGuards Report which was approved by the IRS. NASS implemented a stand-alone, secure processing system for Federal Tax Information (FTI). This was required by IRS to provide high-level security for names received from the IRS for processing the 2002 Census of Agriculture. NASS was able to begin deploying routers with built-in firewalls. Routers were implemented in sites where sharing of telecommunications resources will be possible under USDA

optimization efforts. Due to budget constraints NASS was unable to implement intrusion detection. NASS currently works with the Department to monitor access to NASS telecommunication resources. NASS has been very satisfied with the router and firewall combination. NASS is now sharing telecommunication services in three locations. This is financially beneficial to all agencies within USDA. The IRS system is providing the secure processing environment that was intended. This performance indicator is being discontinued in the FY 2002 and Revised FY 2001 APP.

Current fiscal Year Performance:

- ! Cooperative Agreements and MOUs:** NASS continually works to increase the number of agreements and MOUs each year with its external cooperators as it has successfully done in the past. NASS also strives to provide the same level of high quality work and service to its cooperators.
- ! Security Technologies and Systems:** Implementation of new router configurations in all of the remaining NASS field offices is expected to take place during FY 2001 and FY 2002, if feasible under budget constraints. NASS plans to implement the router and firewall combination in six additional field offices this fiscal year. NASS has procured and is in the process of implementing switch technology in the remaining field offices. At the end of this fiscal year, NASS will have replaced old hub technology with switches in all field office locations.

NASS will implement the required desktop encryption for all FFIS users by the end of this fiscal year prior to the system going to production next fiscal year. The FFIS implementation was not ready for testing in FY 2000. NASS has implemented the required desktop encryption for the Beta users selected for testing the FFIS system. NASS continuously monitors security and has an implementation plan through FY 2002.

Program Evaluation: No program evaluation has been completed for FY 2000.

NASS MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Management Initiative 1: Strive to meet customer needs and expectations.

NASS's pledge to its customers is to respond to each customer in a courteous and helpful manner; accurately direct customers to the person or agency with the appropriate information; provide complete, accurate, plain language information about NASS programs, products, and services; make it easy to find and order reports; deliver promised information promptly; explain why, when NASS cannot meet the customer's request; and deliver services without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or family status.

With the steady increase in demand for agricultural information and the steady decline in the number of commercial farmers, NASS's concern with respondent burden issues has never been more critical. NASS continues to fortify relationships with trade and producer associations at the national and local level to increase their support and publicity of the surveys. NASS provides these associations with news stories and advertisements to use in communication with their members. NASS has centralized marketing and public relations activities to streamline processes, achieve better quality results, and conserve resources by eliminating duplicate efforts on the part of the SSOs. The primary focus has been enhanced,

increased communication of survey benefits through the media, in writing, and in person. NASS prepared several communications packages for the SSOs to use when promoting specific surveys to producers and their associations. These packages include electronic presentations, media releases, talking points, brochures, public service advertisements, suggested interview questions for reporters, presurvey letters, and other tools to communicate the purpose and, most importantly, benefits of agricultural surveys.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Improve customer awareness, responsiveness, service, and communications within NASS to enhance the data products and services delivered to satisfy changing customer data needs and expectations.			
! Percentage of data users who are satisfied or very satisfied with NASS service.	n/a	90%	n/a ¹
! Number of new data products and services introduced to fulfill customer requests.	9	5	15

¹ Performance indicators for evaluating data users ratings are being discontinued but will be replaced with information from the American Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Table 10: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for New Products and Services

Charts & Tables: NASS sets annual performance targets for the number of new products and services. The FY 2000 actual performance surpassed the FY 2000 target.

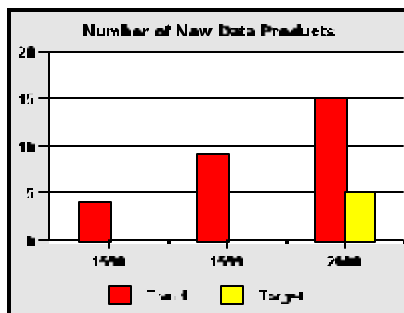


Chart 3: Number of New Data Products

Year	Number of New Data Products	Target
1998	4	
1999	9	
2000	15	5

Table 11: Number of New Data Products

2000 Data: The data in Chart 3 and Table 11 for new data products are based on agency information maintained internally in Headquarters offices in Washington, D.C., by the Marketing and Information Services Office (MISO). It is reviewed for consistency,

completeness, and accuracy. There were no customer service data available to report the percent of data users who were satisfied or very satisfied with NASS service.

Analysis of Results: NASS exceeded its performance goal for new products and services but did not meet its target for measuring customer satisfaction established in the FY 2000 APP. During FY 2000, NASS introduced 15 new products to address additional data needs in addition to the 425 National reports released during the calendar year. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! ***New Data Products and Services:*** *1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey*: Report was released in November 1999. This report provides a snapshot of irrigation practices in the agricultural industry during 1998, and shows interesting trends since the last survey conducted in 1994. Although previous surveys provided data for 18 water resource areas and 27 States, the 1998 results offer data for every State and 20 water resource areas. This new irrigation survey also includes first-time statistics on computers for irrigation, water management, and water distribution software.

1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey Quick Facts (1998): Report was issued November 2000. A tri-fold brochure with text, charts, and graphs that highlights major data series from the 1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey.

1998 Census of Aquaculture Publication, Volume 3, Special Studies, Part 3: Report was issued February 2000. This was the first national census taken for the aquaculture industry. This census responded to the intense need for an accurate measurement of the aquaculture sector. The census listed catfish, trout, and tropical fish and provided space for producers to list any other food-type or other aquaculture products sold from their operation. The census collected detailed information relating to on-farm aquaculture practices, size of operation based on water area, production, sales, method of production, sources of water, point of first sale outlets, cooperative agreements and contracts, and aquaculture distributed for restoration or conservation purposes. The census also presents data on size of operation, methodology, sales by category, losses, irrigation, and other topics.

1998 Census of Aquaculture Quick Facts: Report was issued February 2000. A tri-fold brochure with text, charts, and graphs that highlights major data series from the 1998 Census of Aquaculture.

Census of Horticultural Specialties (1998), Volume 3, Special Studies, Part 2: Report was issued in March 2000. This census was taken in accordance with the provisions of "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997." The census, conducted for the first time by NASS, is the eighth census of horticultural specialties. This census has traditionally been conducted every 10 years. The publication includes producers of floriculture, nursery, and other specialty crops, such as sod, mushrooms, food crops produced under glass or other protection, transplants for commercial production, and seeds. Covers the United States, each State, and leading counties. Presents tabulations on number of establishments, value of sales, type of horticultural products, and other data items for horticultural operations. Major changes in 1998 to the horticultural specialties census are the inclusion of cut Christmas trees, short terms woody crops, and marketing channels.

Census of Horticultural Quick Facts (1998): Report was issued September 2000. A tri-fold brochure with text, charts, and graphs that highlights major data series from the

1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties.

1998 Census of Agriculture - Puerto Rico, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Part 52: Report was issued March 2000. The 1998 census was taken to obtain agricultural statistics for each county, State (including territories and protectorates), and the Nation. The 1998 census is the fourteenth census of agriculture of Puerto Rico. The reference year, 1998, reflects the year data were gathered. Inventory data reflect numbers on hand on July 1, 1998. The data are for the 12-month period of July 1, 1997, through June 30, 1998. The census cycle remains every five years, and the years referenced in the publication have been changed to more accurately reflect the collection period. The census is the leading source of statistics about Puerto Rico's agricultural production.

Puerto Rico 1998 Census of Agriculture Quick Facts: Report was issued March 2000. A tri-fold brochure with text, charts, and graphs that highlights major data series from the 1998 Puerto Rico Census of Agriculture.

Agricultural Chemical Usage - Postharvest Applications - Soybeans and Oats: Report was issued March 2000. Chemical application rates and quantity of crops treated with pesticides following harvest. Results refer to pesticide applications made at off-farm grain storage facilities after crops were harvested.

Agricultural Chemical Usage - Cattle and Cattle Facilities: Report was issued April 2000. This report is a summary of information on chemical applications to beef and dairy cattle and associated cattle structures and facilities.

Characteristics of Hispanic Farm Operators: Report was issued September 2000. This tri-fold brochure was issued at the request of the Secretary's Hispanic Advisory Council. The colorful quick facts brochure contains tables, text, and charts highlighting information from the 1997 Census of Agriculture on the Hispanic farm community.

1998 Census of Agriculture - Virgin Islands of the United States Area Data, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Outlying Areas: The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about the U.S. Virgin Island's agricultural production in 1998. Tables in the publication show detailed island data accompanied by historical data from the previous census; selected data items presented by election districts; and provide 1998 island data cross-tabulated by tenure of operator, age of operator, size of farm, and value of agricultural products sold.

1998 Census of Agriculture - Guam of the United States Area Data, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Outlying Areas: The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about the Guam agricultural production in 1998. Tables in the publication show detailed island data accompanied by historical data from the previous census; selected data items presented by election districts; and provide 1998 island data cross-tabulated by tenure of operator, age of operator, size of farm, and value of agricultural products sold.

1998 Census of Agriculture - Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands of the United States Area Data, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Outlying Areas: The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about the Northern Mariana Islands agricultural production in 1998. Tables in the publication show detailed island data accompanied by historical data from the previous census; selected data items presented

by election districts; and provide 1998 island data cross-tabulated by tenure of operator, age of operator, size of farm, and value of agricultural products sold.

1997 Census of Agriculture - Ranking of Congressional Districts Report: Report was issued early 2000. The census of agriculture asked farm operators to report the principal State and county of agricultural activity for the farm operation, but not the congressional district. For this report, farms were assigned to congressional districts according to the reported State and county of agricultural activity. Several factors were used to determine the most likely district to assign these farms. These factors included land area size presence of urban or rural land and other relevant information.

- ! **Data User Ratings:** Information provided by the data users at the Data User Meeting in Chicago on October 18-19, 1999, covered a wide variety of commodity and statistical data issues. Questionnaires are distributed at these meetings, but very little numerical information was provided by the data users on customer satisfaction. The incompleteness of the information makes any method of numerical calculations impractical because they would not be representative of NASS's wide spectrum of data users. Performance indicators for evaluating data users ratings established by the FY 2000 APP are being discontinued but will be replaced with the American Customer Satisfaction Survey information. Future agency plans for customer satisfaction surveys are explained in the Descriptions of Plans and Schedule and Current Fiscal Year Performance for this goal.

Description of Plans and Schedules: Performance measures established in the FY 2000 Annual Performance Plan (APP) for evaluating data user ratings and satisfaction with NASS services were changed with the use of the American Customer Satisfaction Survey which was conducted in September-October 2000. The results of the survey were released in December 2000. This survey generates an index called the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) which measures the Agency's performance regarding customer service and products. The use of this survey is now being widely used in government and private industry for establishing baselines and comparing level of services provided among organizations. The ACSI and index components have now incorporated in the most recent FY 2001 and 2002 APPs and will serve as the standard for the future.

Current Fiscal Year Performance: The newly established Marketing and Information Services Office (MISO) provides publicity and public relations materials, disseminates statistics, operates the Publications Office and Agricultural Statistics Information Line, administers the NASS Homepage at <http://www.usda.gov/nass/>, supports public relations activities of HQ and State Statistical Offices (SSOs), develops new publication products, coordinates relations with the media, and supports the Agricultural Statistics Board. MISO will play a key agency role in facilitating the development and deployment of new products for NASS data users for FY 2001 and beyond in achieving performance targets.

- ! **New Data Products and Services:** 97 Zip Code and District Rankings CD-Rom: Report was issued in late 2000 and the information can be accessed on the Internet. Hard-copy will be available in early 2001. This report presents agricultural statistics by five-digit postal zip code and congressional district (106th Congress) in two separate files, for all farms in all 50 States. Tables show the total market value of products sold and the number of farms by size for land in farms, cropland harvested, selected crops, and inventory of cattle, calves, hogs, and pigs. Crops vary by State, and tables show number of farms by acres harvested for commodities such as tobacco, cotton, soybeans for beans, peanuts for nuts, and land in orchards.

Agricultural Chemical Usage - Swine and Swine Facilities: Report was issued December 2000. This report is a summary of information on chemical applications to hogs and associated hog structures and facilities.

1999 Census of Agriculture - American Samoa of the United States Area Data, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Outlying Areas: The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about American Samoa agricultural production in 1998. Tables in the publication show detailed island data accompanied by historical data from the previous census; selected data items presented by election districts; and provide 1998 island data cross-tabulated by tenure of operator, age of operator, size of farm, and value of agricultural products sold.

- ! **Data User Ratings:** Annual Data User Meetings were held. The first meeting was held in Washington, D.C., on October 10, 2000, to discuss a host of chemical use, food safety, and environmental issues. A second data user meeting was held in Chicago, IL., October 16, 2000, with commodity and agricultural industry representatives to discuss crop and livestock program issues. NASS anticipates continuing these annual data users meetings to discuss customer data needs, quality of service and to seek their advice on current and emerging issues. The Federal Consulting Group presented the results of the American Customer Satisfaction Survey to NASS in December 2000. The ACSI will provide a benchmark for NASS in FY 2001 to assess agency processes and program solutions and for implementation of future quality initiatives. The ACSI index and its components are included in the Revised FY 2001 and FY 2002 APP.

Program Evaluations: No program evaluations were conducted.

Management Initiative 2: Employ a diversified and technically competent staff and treat employees fairly and with respect.

The quality of NASS's agricultural estimates are strengthened by employing, training, and supporting a diverse workforce that fosters creativity, ingenuity, and efficiency in the agricultural statistics program. NASS envisions itself as the acknowledged statistical leader for those seeking counsel, survey services, or data products regarding agricultural and rural statistics, a standing achieved by consistently demonstrating sound methodology, effective resource utilization, and a focus on customer service. NASS employees are strengthened by the diversity of their cultures and backgrounds, the enjoyment of a challenging career, and their unsurpassed level of dedication to the Agency. NASS continually strengthens its technical, managerial, and leadership capabilities of employees who will be recognized for leadership and management excellence in USDA as evidenced by continuous improvements in productivity and efficiency.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Hire, train, and develop a highly qualified, diversified, and technically competent staff in an atmosphere of trust, teamwork, and in a healthy, comfortable, modern, and safe environment.	yes	yes	yes
! All program needs are met and NASS meets Department guidelines regarding diversity in staff.	24%	20%	26%
! Percentage of NASS employees reporting low or very low morale.	0	0	0
! Number of substantiated EEO complaints filed by NASS employees.			

Table 12: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for NASS Staff

Charts and Tables: NASS sets annual performance targets for measuring employee morale and EEO complaints. The FY 2000 actual performance for employee morale did not meet the FY 2000 target but the number of substantiated EEO complaints met the FY 2000 target.

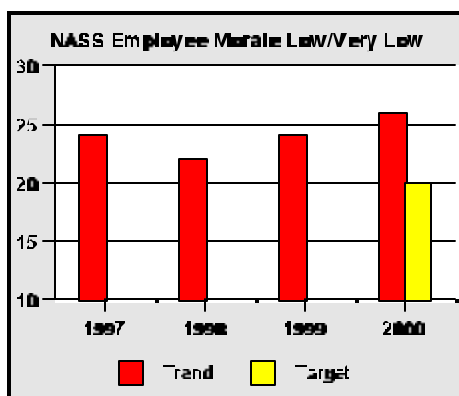


Chart 4: NASS Employee Morale

Year	NASS Employees with Low or Very Low Morale	Target Percent
1997	24%	
1998	22% ¹	
1999	24%	
2000	26% ¹	20%

¹ HRME data

Table 13: NASS Employee Morale

Year	Total Number of Complaints & Grievances Filed	Actual Number of Substantiated EEO Complaints Filed	Target Number of Substantiated EEO Complaints Filed
1996	3	0	
1997	5	0	
1998	10	0	
1999	6	0	
2000	3	0	0

Table 14: Number of Substantiated EEO Complaints

2000 Data: Personnel information for the 2000 data is compiled by the Human Resources unit of the Budget / Administrative Services Office (BASO) and the Director of Civil Rights using the National Finance Center (NFC) Personnel System and other administrative information maintained internally by the Civil Rights Director. Information for the NASS Organizational Climate Survey is maintained internally by NASS. Information for employee morale is based on 171 SSO employees who were interviewed on Human Resource Management Evaluations (HRMEs) completed in the field offices since the 1999 Organizational Climate Survey was completed. Data limitations for employee morale reported for 2000 may not be representative of the entire agency due to the small number of responses, but may give some indication of the possible trend of how employees may respond to the 2001 Organizational Climate Survey.

Analysis of Results: NASS met its performance goal in employing a diversified and technically competent staff and treating employees fairly and with respect. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! Staff Diversity: Employment and Agency diversity information for FY 2000 was obtained from the NFC. As of September 2000, the NASS permanent, full-time, and part-time employees totaled 1,114, with a breakdown of 532 men and 582 women. During the past several years, NASS has been addressing any existing under-representation within the Agency for the following four most populous occupational series (those having 50 or more employees): GS-1530, Agricultural Statistician; GS-1529, Mathematical Statistician; GS-

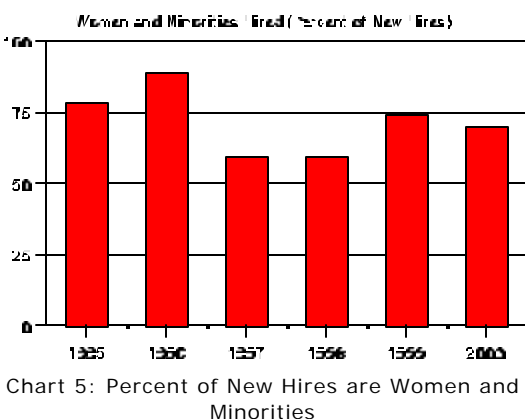


Chart 5: Percent of New Hires are Women and Minorities

334, Computer Specialist; and GS-1531, Statistical Assistant. All personnel actions (hires, promotions, reassignments, resignations, etc.) impacting the workforce's diversity within these four series are tracked since these occupational series combined make up approximately 81 percent of the Agency's total workforce. NASS continued to make great strides in recruiting and hiring a diverse group of new employees in the four major job series. Of the 73 new employees hired in FY 2000, 70 percent of the new hires were women and minorities. Over the past several years, NASS has found the market for recruiting Statisticians and Computer Specialists to be much more competitive than in the past. To enable the Agency to be more competitive, the

NASS Senior Executive Team (SET) offers recruitment and relocation bonuses for certain situations. Consequently, employees with a reporting date of May 1, 2000, and after may be eligible for either of these bonuses providing they meet the eligibility criteria established in the administrative instructions for this program.

Most of the new employees were recruited by State Statisticians in the SSOs through local colleges and universities, with special emphasis placed on recruiting qualified students from the 1890 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. NASS is planning to continue using internship programs as its primary program for hiring and recruiting a diverse workforce.

! **Employee Morale:** A summary of the HRME data for FY 2000 consisted of 171 employee responses (representing only about 14 percent of all employees in NASS); 26 percent rated their morale as very low or low. This is 2 points above the previous survey and 6 points above the performance target of 20 percent. The accumulated information compiled from the HRMEs is questionable because the data are not representative of all NASS employees due to the small segment of the Agency that was measured. The two previous surveys showed no significant change in employee morale between 1997 and the 1999 Organizational Climate Survey. A more accurate and complete picture of employee morale will be reflected in the 2001 Organizational Climate Survey data.

! **Substantiated EEO Complaints:** The actual number of substantiated EEO complaints filed is based on complaints and grievances that are reviewed and accepted for formal investigation under the Departmental EEO complaint process and which subsequently result in a finding of discrimination against a NASS management official or employee. There were a total of 3 complaints in FY 2000, but none of them has resulted in a ruling of discrimination against the Agency.

The FY 2000 annual civil rights performance rating for NASS was completed by the USDA's Office of Civil Rights who reported that NASS had made considerable efforts to strengthen the Agency's civil rights program. NASS had successfully addressed all of the performance indicators under the Agency's control and had demonstrated commitment to achieving civil rights progress during FY 2000.

Current Fiscal Year Performance: NASS requires employees to use Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to reflect their career goals within the Agency's career paths and develop innovative and flexible training programs to meet individual needs. NASS pays training costs for employees who wish to develop their skills and build experience and versatility through staff mobility. NASS strengthens the technical, managerial, and leadership capabilities of employees by creating a cadre of needed specialists with a series of technical career tracks, aligning training and job opportunities with employees' technical and managerial career goals, developing training programs to align with changing program needs, and striving to employ a diversified and technically competent staff. NASS is planning to conduct civil rights training in coordination with USDA's ongoing efforts along with normally scheduled supervisory and management training in FY 2001.

NASS is conducting a 2001 NASS Leadership Workshop scheduled for April 23-26, 2001, for all NASS supervisors and managers in Headquarters and the State Statistical Offices (SSOs) in the field. This workshop will focus on leadership, team building, and managing the Agency's resources. It will incorporate presentations and hands-on examples in leadership training. In addition, a session with the Resource Management Council will discuss

management and set priorities for the Agency's resources. Participants will complete a 360-Degree Leadership Effectiveness Inventory measure prior to the workshop, and results will be presented confidentially to employees at the workshop.

NASS Headquarters and field office staff attended and participated in numerous state and national industry and commodity association meetings and conferences throughout FY 2001. NASS will continue to make extensive use of cooperative agreements with the State Departments of Agriculture nationwide and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) in supporting the NASS statistical programs, at both the local and national levels. NASS continues its technical consulting efforts within the Department and other government agencies, as well as internationally with several Central American and Eastern European countries and China.

! **Staff Diversity:** The current hiring freeze was initiated due to limited budget resources available for salaries. This is limiting the Agency's ability to fill vacancies when highly trained, experienced statisticians and staff leave the Agency due to retirement or resignation for higher paying jobs in the private industry. However, some selected and limited hiring is being done on a case-by-case basis for job applicants who have high caliber skills, knowledge, and abilities.

! **Employee Morale:** Survey results for evaluating employee morale will be generated from the 2001 NASS Organizational Survey conducted in February 2001 by the Survey Research Center at the University of Maryland, College Park. The survey will be administered to all NASS employees including some State employees who work in NASS field office locations. The results and detailed analysis of the 2001 NASS Organizational Climate Survey will be published and distributed at the 2001 Leadership Workshop and to all NASS employees, and will be available upon request. NASS Organizational Climate Surveys are typically administered every 2-3 years. Previous climate surveys were done in 1988, 1994, 1997, and 1999. Continued improvements in the organization have been ongoing.

! **Substantiated EEO Complaints:** NASS does not anticipate any substantiated EEO complaints this year.

Program Evaluations: An Internal Organizational Climate Survey Evaluation Team was chartered by NASS Senior Management in 1999. The team's task was to analyze the results of the 1999 Organizational Climate Survey and make comparisons, when applicable; assess the Agency's goals and priorities; and, make recommendations to NASS Senior Management in FY 2000. The team played a vital role in evaluating the questionnaire and providing input for the 2001 survey. The team has also articulated the NASS Core Value System and provided recommendations consistent with those values that will be important in making NASS "a great place to work."

Management Initiative 3: Ensure an effective information resource management system that maximizes productive capability and facilitates communication for employees.

Clear and concise communication throughout NASS is essential to the general operation, efficiency, and responsiveness of the Agency. Through use of its information technology and resource management systems, NASS continually strives to promote government efficiency by its employees and maintain information that is easily accessible by its customers. Employee and public confidence in the security of its electronic information

systems and processes are also essential for maximizing employee productivity and facilitating communication within NASS and with its customers. In the future, this includes expanding NASS's capabilities for allowing individuals or entities the option to submit information or transact with NASS electronically, when practicable, and to maintain records electronically, when practicable. NASS' use of information technology is a major means of supporting the USDA goals to improve organizational productivity, accountability, and performance, and to ensure that USDA provides fair and equitable service to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees. Employee workstation are equipped with connections to the NASS WAN, e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, the Internet, the Intranet, and a host of software applications that have significantly enhanced communications and improved organizational productivity, accountability and performance.

Annual Performance Goals and Indicators	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Target	FY 2000 Actual
Effectively manage an information resources management system that uses the latest technology to maximize productive capability and facilitate communication for efficient delivery of NASS services to the public.			
! Number of report due dates missed due to equipment failure.	0	0	0
! Percent of employees strongly agreeing or agreeing that the physical work environment is not an impediment for doing their job well.	80%	85%	n/a ¹

¹ No HRME data or Organizational Climate Survey data was available for reporting purposes in FY 2000.

Table 15: Annual Performance Goals and Indicators for Reports Missed Due to Equipment Failure and Employee's Physical Work Environment

Charts and Tables: NASS sets annual performance targets for equipment failures and employee ratings of their work environment. The FY 2000 actual performance for equipment failures met the FY2000 target; no data was available for evaluating employee ratings of their work environment.

Year	Number of NASS Reports and Releases	Due Dates Missed Due to Equipment Failures	Target
1998	425	1	
1999	419	0	
2000	425	0	0

Table 16: Number of Equipment Failures

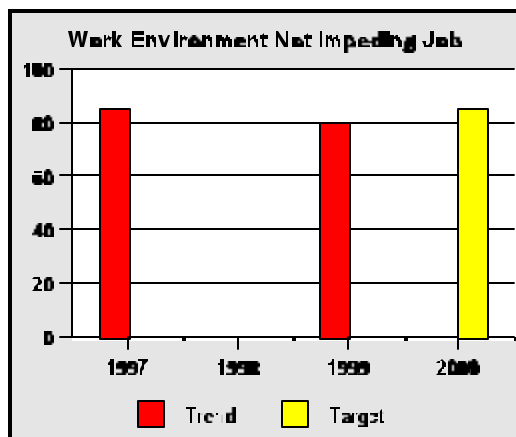


Chart 6: Employees Work Environment

Year	Employees Agreeing that Physical Work not Impeding Them	Target
1997	85%	
1998	n/a	
1999	80%	
2000	n/a ¹	85%

¹ No data available (see Table 15)

Table 17: Employees Work Environment

2000 Data: The data in Table 16 for the number of report due dates missed due to equipment failure are based on Agency information maintained internally in Headquarters offices in Washington, D.C., by the MISO. It is reviewed for consistency, completeness, and accuracy. As indicated in Chart 6 and Table 17, there were not any Organizational Climate Survey or HRME data available to report the percent of employee who agree or strongly agree that the physical work environment is not an impediment for doing their job well. The Organizational Climate Survey is conducted every two years with the most current survey conducted in February 2001.

Analysis of Results: NASS met its performance goal in ensuring an effective information resource management system that maximizes productive capability and facilitates communication for employees. However, there were no results available for evaluating NASS work environment and did not meet the FY 2000 target. A brief analysis is provided for each of the indicators for this performance goal:

! **Equipment Failures:** Of the 425 national reports published in the 2000 calendar year, there were no report due dates missed due to computer equipment failures in NASS during FY 2000.

! **Physical Work Environment:** No information was collected for this measure in FY 2000 as it was determined it would be most efficient to collect this information through the organizational climate survey.

Description of Plans and Schedules: The 2001 NASS Organizational Survey was conducted in February 2001 by the Survey Research Center at the University of Maryland, College Park, to evaluate employees' physical work environment. The survey was administered to all NASS employees including some State employees who work in NASS field office locations. The results and detailed analysis of the 2001 NASS Organizational Climate Survey will be published and distributed at the 2001 Leadership Workshop and to all NASS employees, and will be available upon request. Previous climate surveys were done in 1988, 1994, 1997, and 1999.

Current Fiscal Year Performance:

- ! **Equipment Failures:** Implementation of new security technologies and systems and continuous employee training on processing and using NASS systems is paramount in dealing with equipment failure. Procurement of some needed equipment has been delayed until FY 2002 due to budget constraints.
- ! **Physical Work Environment:** NASS Senior Management plans to use the results of the 2001 Organizational Climate Survey to assess needs for improvements regarding the physical work environment of employees. Continued improvements in the organization have been ongoing.

Program Evaluations: An internal Organizational Climate Survey Evaluation Team was chartered by NASS Senior Management in 1999. The team's task was to analyze the results of the 1999 Organizational Climate Survey and make comparisons, when applicable; assess the Agency's goals and priorities; and, make recommendations to NASS Senior Management in FY 2000. The team played a vital role in evaluating the questionnaire and providing input for the 2001 survey. The team has also articulated the NASS Core Value System and provided recommendations consistent with those values that will be important to everyone in making NASS "a great place to work."